

## SCHOOL MEAL/FEEDING PROGRAM(S)

**Most recently completed school year:**  
March 2018 – December 2018 (180 school days)

1. Complimentary School Food Program (Programa de Alimentación Complementaria Escolar, or P.A.C.E.)
2. Grain Program for School Lunch (Programa de Granos para el Almuerzo Escolar)

**Lead Agency:** Ministry of Education (Ministerio de Educación)

## NATIONAL LAWS, POLICIES, AND STANDARDS

- ☒ **National school feeding policy**
- ☒ **Nutrition**
- ☐ Food safety
- ☐ Agriculture
- ☐ Private sector involvement

Line item in the national budget... ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NR

### BUDGET

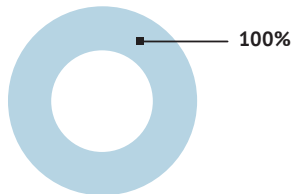
Total:  
USD 23,213,901

☐ National government:  
USD 23,213,901

☐ International donors\*:  
USD 0

☐ Private sector: USD 0

☐ Other donors: USD 0



*\*Contributions by United Nations agencies or non-governmental organizations often represent funding from multiple donors.*

## INFRASTRUCTURE

Some (but not all) schools have electricity, piped water, flush toilets, cafeterias, and kitchens. School meals are prepared on-site, while school snacks are both prepared on-site and procured in processed form.

## SPECIAL NOTES

Some UNESCO data was used to complete this report.

NR = No Response

## MEALS/SNACKS/MODALITY

- ☐ Breakfast
- ☒ **Lunch**
- ☐ Dinner
- ☒ **Snacks**
- ☐ Take-home rations
- ☐ Conditional cash transfer

- ☒ **Grains/cereals**
- ☐ Roots, tubers
- ☐ Legumes and nuts
- ☒ **Dairy products**
- ☐ Eggs
- ☐ Meat
- ☐ Poultry
- ☐ Fish
- ☐ Green, leafy vegetables
- ☐ Other vegetables
- ☐ Fruits
- ☐ Oil
- ☐ Salt
- ☐ Sugar

**Prohibited food items:** Artificial condiments, meats with excess fat, sausages

## FOOD SOURCES

- ☒ **Purchased (domestic)**
- ☒ **Purchased (foreign)**
- ☐ In-kind (domestic)
- ☐ In-kind (foreign)

## COMPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES

- ☒ **Handwashing with soap**
- ☐ Height measurement
- ☐ Weight measurement
- ☒ **Deworming treatment**
- ☒ **Eye testing/eyeglasses**
- ☐ Hearing testing/treatment
- ☐ Dental cleaning/testing
- ☐ Menstrual hygiene
- ☐ Drinking water
- ☐ Water purification

## COMPLEMENTARY EDUCATION PROGRAMS

- EDUCATION**
- ☐ Nutrition
  - ☐ Health
  - ☐ Food and agriculture
  - ☐ Reproductive health
  - ☐ Hygiene
  - ☐ HIV prevention

- OTHER**
- ☐ School gardens
  - ☐ Physical education

☒ = mandatory

*The checked and highlighted items are reported as required, though they may not be uniformly implemented.*



*GCNF is a non-political, non-profit entity incorporated in 2006. Funding for this survey and a follow-up survey in 2021 is being provided, in part, by the United States Department of Agriculture under agreement number FX18TA-10960G002.*

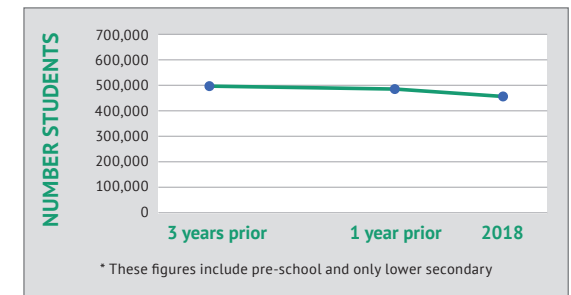
# REPUBLIC OF Panama



## SCHOOL MEAL PROGRAMS

### CHILDREN RECEIVING FOOD, 2018

School level	Total #	# Enrolled	# Receiving Food
Primary school	462,628	408,961	N/A
Secondary school	434,136	344,790	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>896,764</b>	<b>753,751</b>	<b>461,744</b>

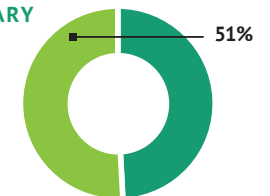


### COVERAGE: PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN

Total number primary and secondary school-age children: 896,764

Receiving school food:  
☒ 461,744

- Food was also provided to some students in
- ☒ **Pre-schools**
  - ☐ Vocational/trade schools
  - ☐ University/higher education
  - ☐ Other



## NUTRITION

School feeding program(s) include/involve the following:

- ☒ **Fortified foods**
- ☐ Bio-fortified foods
- ☐ Micronutrient supplements
- ☒ **Nutritionists involved**
- ☐ Special training for cooks/caterers in nutrition
- ☒ **Objective to meet nutritional goals**
- ☒ **Objective to reduce obesity**

### Food items fortified:

Grains and dairy products

### Micronutrients added to fortified foods:

Iron, Vitamin A, Iodine, Zinc, Folate, Vitamin B12, Thiamine, Riboflavin, Niacin, Vitamin B6, Calcium, and others

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

18 nutritionists are involved in school feeding programs in Panama. To mitigate overweight/obesity, P.A.C.E. incorporates education programs on health, nutrition, and food, as well as physical education, while the Grain Program includes nutritional requirements for school meals and food restrictions on or near school grounds.

## AGRICULTURE, EMPLOYMENT, AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

### Jobs created by school feeding programs

- NR Cooks and food preparers
- NR Transporters
- NR Off-site processors
- NR Food packagers and handlers
- 50** Monitoring
- NR Food service management
- NR Safety and quality inspectors
- NR Other

### Farmers were involved with the school feeding program(s)...

- ☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ NR

### Other private sector (for profit) actors were involved...

- ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NR

### There was a focus on creating jobs or leadership or income-generating opportunities for...

- ☐ Women
- ☐ Youth
- ☐ Other groups

### There was community engagement (by parents or others) in the school feeding program(s)

- ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NR

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Grain Program meals are prepared by three cooks per school per day, though these are usually volunteer positions.

## CONTACTS: PANAMA

**Agency:** Ministry of Education

**Website:** [www.meduca.gob.pa](http://www.meduca.gob.pa)

**Email:** NR

## SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

School feeding programs in Panama have been associated with a reduction in the number of children dropping out of school, a decrease in child malnutrition, and improved eating habits. The programs are supported by national legislation, draw (mostly) from domestic production, and include food items that have been fortified with vitamins and minerals.

Challenges associated with school feeding include cumbersome bureaucratic processes, along with some challenges raised by bidding companies. The limited budget is also considered to be a challenge.

## STUDIES CONDUCTED

None specified

## RESEARCH NEEDED

Impact evaluation of Programa de Granos Para el Almuerzo Escolar (the Complementary School Food Program)

## COMPLEMENTARY SCHOOL FOOD PROGRAM PROGRAMA DE ALIMENTACIÓN COMPLEMENTARIA ESCOLAR (P.A.C.E.)

Lead implementer(s): Ministry of Education

### OBJECTIVES:

- To meet educational goals
- To meet nutritional and/or health goals
- To prevent or mitigate obesity
- To meet agricultural goals

### MODALITIES OF PROVIDING STUDENTS WITH FOOD:

- In-school snacks provided four times per week during the school year (9 months)

### TARGETING:

Pre-schools and primary schools; the law indicates who will be the program beneficiaries.

### HOW MANY STUDENTS RECEIVED SCHOOL FOOD IN 2018 SCHOOL YEAR?

School level	# Students	% Girls	% Boys
Pre-school	63,261	—	—
Primary school	373,789	—	—
Secondary school	NR		
<b>Total</b>	<b>437,050</b>	—	—

### FOOD ITEMS:

Grains/cereals\*      Dairy products\*  
\* fortified

### FOOD SOURCES:

Yes - Purchased (domestic)      0 - In-kind (domestic)  
Yes - Purchased (foreign)      0 - In-kind (foreign)

### NOTES:

Food items in P.A.C.E. are fortified with vitamins and minerals. A majority of the food is procured in packaged/processed form, and it is generally sourced from large-scale food companies. Private companies are involved in food trading, food processing, and transport.



## GRAIN PROGRAM FOR SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAMA DE GRANOS PARA EL ALMUERZO ESCOLAR

Lead implementer(s): Ministry of Education

### OBJECTIVES:

- To meet educational goals
- To meet nutritional and/or health goals
- To prevent or mitigate obesity

### MODALITIES OF PROVIDING STUDENTS WITH FOOD:

- In-school meals provided three times per week for six months of the year

### TARGETING:

- Individual student characteristics
- Indigenous, rural, and marginalized urban schools are targeted

### HOW MANY STUDENTS RECEIVED SCHOOL FOOD IN 2018 SCHOOL YEAR?

School level	# Students	% Girls	% Boys
Pre-school	37,139	—	—
Primary school	399,911	—	—
Secondary school	N/A		
<b>Total</b>	<b>437,050</b>	—	—

### FOOD ITEMS:

Grains/cereals\*  
\* fortified

### FOOD SOURCES:

0% Purchased (domestic)      0% In-kind (domestic)  
100% Purchased (foreign)      0% In-kind (foreign)

### NOTES:

School meals are prepared on-site; approximately 80% of participating schools have on-site kitchens, and students' families are involved in food preparation. Small-scale companies are able to competitively compete for bids. However, this program experienced a serious funding deficit in the 2018 school year.